

Food Quality Protection Act Funds for Reduced-Risk Practices for Pest Management: 2005 Requests for Proposals

Overview

EPA Region 9 is requesting proposals for **small grants** to help implement the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA) and support “transition” efforts by growers to more environmentally-sound pest management practices. These grants provide support to projects for education, extension, demonstration, and implementation of integrated pest management practices and related methods of sustainable agriculture. These projects should motivate on-the-ground transition away from pesticides targeted by FQPA, and demonstrate extensive grower participation and potential for adoption of new practices. The Region 9 Agriculture Program is particularly interested in transition efforts that also address pressing regulatory air quality issues such as volatile organic compounds (VOC) and particulate matter (PM), and water quality concerns such as pesticides and sediment loading of impaired water ways. This assistance will be awarded through the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act, Section 20.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 66.716.

Important Dates:

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| January 3, 2005 | Solicitation Posted on Web |
| March 4, 2005 | Proposals must be received by close of business. |
| April 4, 2005 | Funding decisions are announced. |
| September 30, 2005 | Awards made. |

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Full Text Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

The purpose of the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA) Grant Program is to help implement the FQPA and support “transition” efforts by growers to more environmentally-sound pest management practices. These grants provide support to projects for education, extension, demonstration, and implementation of integrated pest management practices and related methods of sustainable agriculture to motivate on-the-ground transition away from pesticides targeted by FQPA. “Sustainable” agriculture refers to farming practices that are environmentally sound, economically viable and socially responsible.

Background

The Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA), passed by Congress in 1996, establishes health-based standards for pesticide residues in raw and processed food. It is intended to protect public health by reducing exposure to pesticides and creating an environment favorable for the development and adoption of lower risk, effective crop protection tools for U.S. agriculture. The EPA, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and numerous agricultural organizations are working on efforts to implement the FQPA. For this effort, EPA established regional programs for FQPA implementation and partnership activities to reduce risks and use of pesticides in agriculture. For more background information on FQPA, visit the EPA website at <http://www.epa.gov/oppfead1/fqpa/>

II. Award Information

The EPA Region 9 Agriculture Program anticipates having up to **\$200,000** in 2005 for **small grant awards** up to \$60,000. The awards will be for projects that incorporate education, extension, demonstration, and implementation of innovative efforts that enable growers to reduce their reliance on pesticides targeted for removal under FQPA and move towards more sustainable pest management practices. Costs incurred prior to the grant award will not be reimbursed.

III. Eligibility Information

State agencies, universities, Cooperative Extension, Tribes, and non-profit organizations (including not-for-profit commodity groups or farmers' groups) are eligible to submit proposals for Food Quality Protection Act grants (CFDA 66.716) under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act, Section 20. The projects must be located in EPA Region 9, which includes California, Nevada, Arizona, Hawaii and the Pacific Trust Islands. Both new and existing projects will be considered. For-profit organizations are not eligible.

Matching funds are not required, however applicants are strongly encouraged to leverage funds from other sources. The awards for the selected proposals will be available September 30, 2005. Funding may be used for **up to two years** from the time that the grant is awarded.

Selection Criteria

Projects that promote implementation of integrated pest management practices and related methods of sustainable agriculture will be evaluated on the following criteria:

Importance of project in relation to FQPA. The proposed project should address critical pest management issues. It should explain the importance of the project and commodity, and explain the relevancy of the project to FQPA implementation. Proposals for projects that use a "systems" approach, incorporating soil, crop, and pest management practices are strongly encouraged but not required.

Extent of grower participation and collaborative approaches. Grower participation and collaborative approaches are key to successful transition and implementation of integrated pest and crop management methods. Therefore, projects should include partnerships with key organizations and extensive grower participation as part of the project activities. Include letters of support from collaborators, indicating their contributions to the project.

Clearly stated objectives. Clearly state and explain the project objectives. Discuss to what degree the project will:

1. reduce or eliminate the use of organophosphate, carbamate and carcinogenic pesticides,
2. increase farmers' adoption of reduced-risk alternatives and/or ecologically-based integrated pest or crop management methods, in significant commercial land area, and
3. create a measurable environmental impact (if applicable).

Potential for regional impact and achieving adoption. Include clear plans for extension, outreach or communication that will lead to effective learning and adoption of new practices. State if the results are likely to be applicable to other regions or cropping systems.

Pressing air or water quality issue. The Region 9 Agriculture Program is particularly interested in transition efforts that also address pressing regulatory air quality issues such as volatile organic compounds (VOC) and particulate matter (PM), and water quality concerns such as pesticides and sediment loading of impaired water ways.

Performance measures for objectives. Proposals will need to include two to three performance measures that can be tracked throughout the project. These measures can either be “direct” and/or “surrogate” measures. Direct measures identify actual environmental changes occurring with IPM adoption. In contrast, surrogate measures identify changes in strategies or behavior that should lead to environmental changes. Although direct measures are more powerful than surrogate measures, most are expensive to track. Consider partnering with agencies or organizations that are already monitoring environmental quality in the project area.

To identify appropriate project performance measures, choose from the measures listed in the Strategic Agriculture Initiative Toolbox located at <http://www.aftresearch.org/sai/> (**SAI Grant Applicants, Performance Measures**). These measures have the potential to indicate environmental improvement as a result of the increased adoption of IPM. They are grouped into nine categories: Dietary (D), Human (H), Behavior (B), Economic (E), Soil (S), Water (W), Air (a), Plant (P) and Animals (A). Be sure to describe the method you will use to attain data to support the measures indicated.

PLEASE NOTE: These grants are intended to support implementation, and cannot be used for basic research. However, the projects may include a *component* for *applied on-farm research*, as long as they also have *demonstration, education and/or outreach* activities. In addition, proposals that maximize resources for “on-the-ground” activities will be viewed more favorably than those proposals with high administrative costs.

IV. Proposal Submission Information

All proposals must contain the following information and adhere to the page limitations listed below. It is recommended that confidential information not be included.

Abstract (maximum one page). Please include name of project, point of contact and complete contact information, amount requested, and if this is a continuing project. If this project builds on previous work, please explain the project’s relevance to work completed and why this particular proposal is important.

Body of Proposal and Workplan (maximum of five pages). Include a well-conceived workplan that is realistic and appropriate to achieving the identified objectives. This should include a brief background on the main issues or challenges, specific objectives, main activities, and expected outcomes and deliverables. The workplan should include the project area and a timeline.

Performance Measures. The workplan should also include two or three performance measures selected from the Strategic Agriculture Initiative Toolbox located at www.aftresearch.org/sai/ as discussed on page 3 of this Request for Proposal.

Budget (maximum one page). Please submit a detailed budget with your proposal, linking the cost of each objective with the budget. Include information on other funding sources, if any.

Qualifications and Support. Include the qualifications and background on the main people or organizations involved as an attachment. Include letters of support from growers or other collaborators, specifying their contribution in project implementation.

Applicants must submit a hard copy of the application along with an electronic version on a floppy disk or CD in Word Perfect or MS Word. Send all proposals to:

Cindy Wire, Agriculture Program
US EPA, Region 9
75 Hawthorne Street, CED-1
San Francisco, CA 94105

All proposals must be **received by close of business on March 4, 2005**. Proposals received after this date will not be reviewed.

V. Proposal Review Information

Proposals will be reviewed and ranked by a panel of experts based on the selection criteria listed on pages three and four. Decisions on the grants will be made by **April 4, 2005**. Applicants will be notified within the following week.

VI. Award Administration

To finalize the grant procedure, award recipients will need to complete a grant application along with financial paperwork. EPA staff will be available for assistance.

Reporting

The selected grant recipients will be asked to complete at least one concise progress report after the grant is awarded, and a final report at the end of the grant period. Progress reports should address the status of all of the objectives and activities in the proposal, and a statement of impacts and expenses. Quarterly Financial Status Reports will also be required.

Disputes

Procedures at 40 CFR 30.63 and 40 CFR 31.70 will apply.

Confidentiality

Applicants must clearly mark information they consider confidential and EPA will make confidentiality decisions in accordance with agency regulations at 40 CFR, Part 2, Subpart B.

Disclaimer

EPA Reserves the right to reject all proposals and to not make any awards.

VII. Agency Contact

If you have questions or need additional information regarding this FQPA Request for Proposal, please call Cindy Wire, Agriculture Program at (415) 947-4242, or email her at wire.cindy@epa.gov.